

New Water Meters for Milwaukee

The city's drinking water utility, the Milwaukee Water Works, is replacing water meters for residential and small business customers during the next several years. The utility will remove and replace the meter, the automated meter reading device (AMR), and the AMR battery. The current meters and electronic reading devices were installed in the 1990s and their working life is coming to an end. State law requires utilities to make sure meters and billings are accurate. The meters and electronic reading devices are owned by the utility but property owners must allow the utility to enter the property to replace the meter.

The project will benefit single family homes and dwellings of four and fewer units, and small businesses in Milwaukee, Greenfield, Hales Corners, and St. Francis. The suburban communities are retail customers of the utility which provides water, system maintenance, and billing.

The utility will notify customers with a letter asking them to call (414) 286-8000 (Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. and Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) to make an appointment to have their meter and electronic reading device replaced. Utility technicians may also call on a property without an appointment as they make replacements in a particular area. Also, if your bill indicates you have had multiple estimated meter readings, you will be asked in a letter or phone call to make an appointment to have the meter and electronic device replaced. The meter readings were estimated because the meter is not working properly or might have been disconnected.

If the Milwaukee Water Works is not able to schedule an appointment to replace the meter at your property, it will mail a water shut-off letter asking you to call and make an appointment. If, after 10 days, the utility still has not heard from you, it will shut off water service to the property. Buildings without water service will be ordered closed by the Department of Neighborhood Services.

Meters will be installed by Milwaukee Water Works employees who will arrive in a City of Milwaukee-identified vehicle and carry Milwaukee Water Works identification. The installation will take 20-30 minutes as the meter technician temporarily turns off the water, installs the new meter and electronic reading device, and turns the water back on.

The new meters provide these benefits:

- AMR eliminates, with rare exceptions, the need to estimate a bill.
- AMR helps customers identify plumbing leaks that result in higher-than-normal bills.

- Customers can track their water usage on the Milwaukee Water Works' website and look for high usage that can indicate costly leaks.
- AMR eliminates the need for a water meter reader to visit the home, once the meter and battery have been replaced.
- There is no charge for the meter and battery replacement. It is included in the cost of service.

Meters mechanically measure the water as it moves through the device. The meter is located where the water service connects to a building, usually in the basement on the wall closest to the street. The AMR, a radio transmitter powered by a battery, is connected to the meter. As the meter reading van passes by the building on the street, a data-collecting device records the meter reading transmitted from the AMR.

About the Milwaukee Water Works

The Milwaukee Water Works is a national leader in providing high-quality drinking water and monitoring water quality. The City of Milwaukee-owned public utility provides pure, safe water to 16 communities: Milwaukee, Brown Deer, Butler, Franklin, Greendale, Greenfield, Hales Corners, Menomonee Falls, Mequon, New Berlin, Shorewood, St. Francis, Thiensville, Wauwatosa, West Allis, West Milwaukee, and to the Milwaukee County Grounds facilities.

Since 1993, the Milwaukee Water Works has invested \$406 million in its infrastructure, from treatment plants to distribution systems, to ensure a reliable supply of high quality drinking water. The utility treats Lake Michigan water with ozone as the primary disinfectant to destroy microorganisms that cause disease, reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts, and remove taste and odor. The additional steps of coagulation and flocculation, sedimentation, biologically active filtration, and chloramine disinfection ensure high quality water from your faucets.